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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 31 | Min 18 | Humidity 36% Partly Sunny Sensex 72,696 | Nifty 22,512 | Gold 1,39,215 | Silver 2,23,248 | Dollar 93.01 | Euro 107.97 | GBP 124.88

TRULY SWEET

City to be first in country to host honey quality testing lab that can tackle growing problem of fake product in the market

PAGE 2

BROKEN DREAMS

TenderSURE footpath in central road comes crumbling despite premium infra costing at least double the normal amount

PAGE 4

Deaths, mishaps, illegalities stop mattering as 'content creators' chase more likes by making short-form videos that can grab most attention even as consumers become more and more addicted to dopamine rush

REEL PAIN IN THE WRONG PLACE

Police have their hands full monitoring, educating law-breakers

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From the Vyalikaval courier prank to the death of a 15-year-old while attempting an "action brake" reel, the consequences of chasing social media fame are becoming increasingly alarming. In the race for likes and online validation, some influencers and youngsters are overlooking social responsibility and public safety, often creating public nuisance or disrupting law and order, which has prompted city police to intervene.

As short-form video trends continue to dominate digital platforms, experts warn that the constant pursuit of validation is driving risky behaviour and emotional dependence.

Recently, a family in Vyalikaval attempted to create a humorous reel as a prank about festive travel rushes by packing an elderly man (the woman's father) inside a gunny sack and taking him to a courier office. The act caused panic when staff noticed the man struggling to breathe inside the bag. However no FIR or NCR was registered

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"Short-form videos, in particular, are designed to tap into the brain's dopamine-driven reward system, conditioning users to stay engaged as algorithms continuously supply highly stimulating content. Excessive consumption of short-form content may diminish empathy, kindness, and awareness of safety —Lakshmi Shashikumar, psychologist

Young & restless

Underage speeding has risen by 163% in just 3 years

Sridhar.Vivan
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Two fatal road accidents reported earlier this year near Hoskote and on roads along the city's outskirts, which claimed several lives including minors riding two-wheelers, may only be the tip of an iceberg. Data placed before the Karnataka Legislative Assembly shows that cases of minors illegally driving vehicles in Bengaluru have surged dramatically over the past three years.

Responding to a question in the House, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara revealed that police registered 1,250 cases between 2023 and 2025 under the Motor Vehicles Act and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against underage drivers and, in several cases, their parents. The figures indicate a steady and sharp rise in offences. In 2023, the Bengaluru traffic police registered 240 cases, including 95 under the Motor Vehicles Act and 145 under BNS. The number climbed to 378 cases in 2024, comprising 197 Motor Vehicles Act cases and 181 under BNS. This meant an increase of 138 cases compared to 2023, which is a 57.5% rise within a year.

The trend intensified further in 2025, when authorities registered 632 cases, including 414 under the Motor Vehicles Act and 218 under BNS. Compared with 2024, the city saw an increase of 254 cases, or a 67.2% in just one year.

Overall, the number of cases has risen from 240 in 2023 to 632 in 2025, marking an absolute increase of 392 cases in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Immersive storytelling

Atta Galatta is presenting an interactive dramatic reading by Venkataraghavan, where the author brings his story to life by performing it as a lively play. The story follows Brachio, a very tall beach-dweller who loves helping people, but must confront what happens when the villagers no longer need him.
Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar;
When: March 29, 1.30 pm

02 Symphony spotlight

The Nadathur Foundation is organising the 5th edition of Nada Sambhrama, a concert series dedicated to promoting and celebrating the rich tradition of Indian classical music. This edition represents an enchanting evening of Hindustani music featuring Vidhushi Shubha Mudgal.
Where: Mangala Mandapa Auditorium, NMKRV Campus;
When: March 28, 6.30 pm

03 Moment of ease

ArtFlute is presenting Choosing to Rest, an online exhibition that explores rest not as inactivity, but as presence - a moment of listening to the body, intuition, and inner rhythm in a world defined by speed and constant output.
Where: ArtFlute Online Gallery (www.artflute.com);
When: Until April 10

04 Subtle resistance

Kapila Nahender presents Pockets of Resistance, a new body of work that examines the subtle yet powerful ways in which nature continues to exist within the dense fabric of contemporary cities through a series of layered oil paintings.
Where: Venkatappa Art Gallery;
When: Until March 29, 11 am to 6 pm

05 Word playoff

Atta Galatta is bringing a sports writing workshop with a squad of aspiring and seasoned writers for a journey into the high-stakes world of sports journalism and storytelling.
Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar;
When: March 28, 11 am

It's all about quality, honey

B'luru to get first-of-its-kind honey quality testing lab, using molecular analysis to provide reports on authenticity and composition, ensuring transparency for consumers

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Honey adulteration has become a pressing concern due to difficulty in detection

Bengaluru is set to become the first city in the country to host a state-of-the-art honey quality testing laboratory, promising to tackle the growing problem of fake honey in the market. Many consumers have often wondered if the jar of honey bought from a local store is genuine, given that imitation honey can closely mimic the colour, taste, and texture of the real product. The new facility at the Bengaluru Agricultural University campus aims to put such doubts to rest.

Molecular level testing

The laboratory will use Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) technology, which can analyse honey at a molecular level and provide precise reports on its authenticity and composition. This means adulterants such as sugar, jaggery, rice syrup, or other additives will be detected easily, and certificates issued will carry global credibility. Honey collected from diverse regions, including the Himalayas, Nilgiri forests, Ooty, and BR hills, will be tested to trace its botanical origin and geographical profile. Once operational, local beekeepers, honey processors, and exporters can get their products certified, ensuring transparency for both domestic consumers and international markets.

The laboratory, whose building is already ready, will soon have the sophisticated NMR instruments imported from Germany installed. Bengaluru Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor SV Suresh explained that the certificates based on NMR testing will be mandatory for honey producers looking to export their product. "This technology will help honey farmers targeting the international market and support processors in setting prices based on genuine composition. Households and exporters alike can benefit from the lab's services," he said.

Laboratory, which has already been built, will soon install advanced NMR instruments from Germany, with Bengaluru Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor SV Suresh noting that NMR-based certificates will be mandatory for honey producers seeking export

Funding for the facility comes from multiple sources. The university is also providing the space and technical staff for operations. Once fully functional, the lab will set rates for testing based on the project's costs and operational requirements.

Ensuring quality in every jar

Experts said that this is more than just a laboratory as it will be a step towards building trust in a product that is widely consumed across the city. Beekeepers from the Western Ghats and other regions will now have a reliable way to certify their honey, giving the city a unique edge in quality assurance. Residents can look forward to jars of honey with verified purity, while exporters will have a globally accepted standard to support their trade. With honey adulteration becoming a pressing concern nationwide, Bengaluru is positioning itself as a hub for authenticity, ensuring every drop of honey tells a verified story.

An official said, "The lab is expected to begin operations soon, and with its NMR technology, it promises to turn Bengaluru into a city where buying genuine honey will no longer be a gamble. From the local kitchen to international shelves, the city is about to make the sweet business of honey a lot more transparent."

State plans to scrap degree courses showing low demand over years

The Higher Education Department is considering discontinuing pre-university and postgraduate courses that have seen a sharp fall in student enrolment across Karnataka. With students increasingly opting for professional and skill-based programmes, demand for several traditional arts, commerce and science courses has declined significantly. The department has begun collecting data on course-wise admissions over the past three years to identify programmes that have consistently recorded very low or even zero enrolment in government colleges and universities.

Officials say the decline is more pronounced in urban areas, though rural regions have also seen reduced interest in some subjects. Among the postgraduate courses witnessing low enrolment are MA in English, Kannada, Sociology, Political Science and Economics, as well as MSc in Mathematics and Physics. At the pre-university level, combinations such as History Kannada Psychology, Kannada Political Science History and Economics based combinations are seeing fewer takers. In some colleges, admissions to certain courses have dropped by nearly 80 per cent, making it difficult to maintain infrastructure and quality teaching for just a handful of students. Officials say the growing preference for job oriented courses has contributed significantly to the declining interest. **–BMB**

Sub-registrars face IT notices over gaps in filing of SFT data

Tensions continue between sub-registrars and Income Tax officials over the submission of Statement of Financial Transactions (SFT) data. Revenue department officials have raised concerns that sub-registrars are being individually targeted with notices over alleged discrepancies in SFT filings for 2021–22. Officials claim that under the pretext of scrutiny, Income Tax authorities are harassing them, prompting the Registration and Stamps Department to move towards further simplification of the SFT submission process.

Sources said that the sub-registrars are mandated to submit annual SFT data for property transactions above Rs 30 lakh, including 29 data points such as Aadhaar, PAN, property details, and document numbers. With an average of 8,000 registrations handled annually per office, even minor errors or outdated address details have led to notices being issued directly to sub-registrars, with penalties of up to Rs 50,000 proposed in some cases, including for records dating back five to six years. Officials have flagged several technical and operational challenges, including non-user-friendly systems, duplication of data entry, and lack of seamless integration with the Kaveri 2.0 software. They have demanded better system integration to reduce manual workload and avoid errors. **–BMB**

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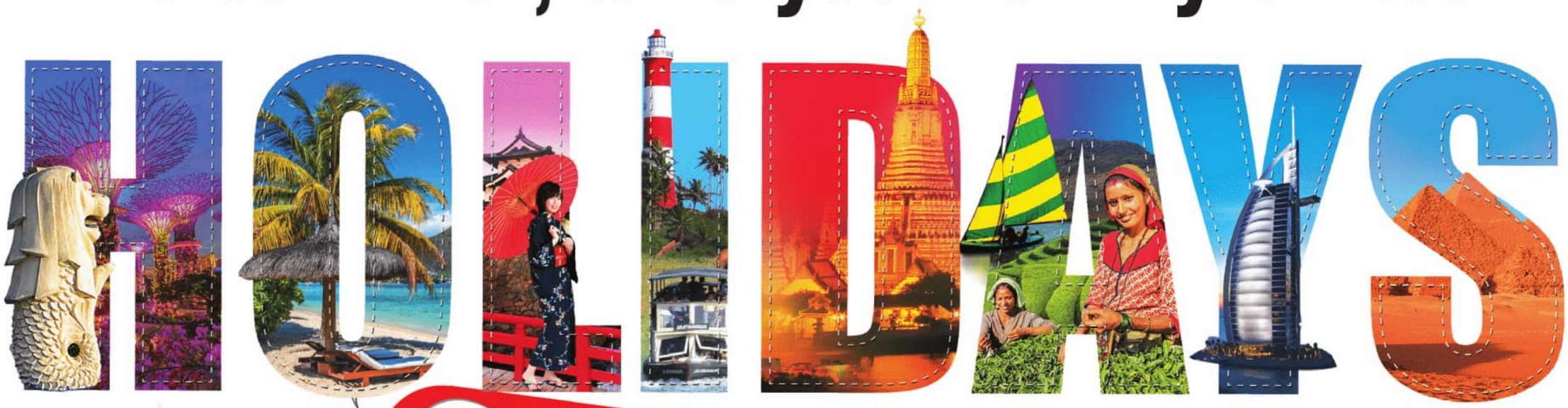

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SN	07	Andaman Swaraj Dweep & Shaheed Dweep	67,000	66,000*
NF	08	Nainital Mussoorie Corbett Park	73,000	70,000*
KF	07	Kashmir Vaishnodevi	76,000	72,000*
FT	06	Thailand	79,000	77,000*
QC	13	Uttaranchal Chardham Yatra	1,02,000	1,00,000*
NY	12	Amazing North East	1,16,000	1,15,000*
F2	10	Singapore Thailand Malaysia	1,67,000	1,65,000*

Easy Visa Tours

Tour Code	Days		Price	Offer Price
NP	08	Nepal	81,000	79,000*
MT	05	Sri Lanka Chota Break	87,000	86,000*
NZ	10	Bhutan	1,00,000	98,000*
MS	08	Sri Lanka Yala National Park	1,07,000	1,03,000*
WB	05	Best of Baku	1,17,000	1,15,000*
MI	06	Mauritius	1,41,000	1,39,000*
JG	06	Japan Chhota Break	2,12,000	2,10,000*
VE	09	Egypt Hurghada	2,12,000	2,10,000*
WI	05	Bali Chota Break	1,03,000	1,01,000*

South East Asia

Tour Code	Days		Price	Offer Price
FY	07	Phuket Krabi Bangkok	1,19,000	1,17,000*
WS	05	Singapore Chota Break	1,39,000	1,37,000*
FG	08	Bali Exotic Gili Island	1,52,000	1,50,000*
FC	09	Chiang Mai Chiang Rai Phuket Krabi Bangkok	1,59,000	1,57,000*
FI	08	Bali Jakarta	1,57,000	1,55,000*
FD	09	Best of Vietnam Phu Quoc	1,82,000	1,80,000*
FH	07	Hong Kong Shenzhen Macao	1,87,000	1,85,000*
ZG	08	Genting Dream Cruise Singapore Malaysia	1,87,000	1,85,000*
FV	10	Vietnam Cambodia	1,90,000	1,88,000*

Indian Tours

Tour Code	Days		Price	Offer Price
BS	06	Munnar Periyar Alleppey	27,000	26,000*
KS	05	Magical Kashmir	33,000	29,000*
NM	07	Leh Ladakh	46,000	43,000*
NS	07	Darjeeling Gangtok	48,000	45,000*
N5	07	Lucknow Ayodhya Prayagraj Varanasi	46,000	45,000*
SB	08	Ooty Kodaikanal Coimbatore	48,000	47,000*
OM	06	Kashmir Amarnath Yatra	63,000	62,000*
NV	09	Valley of Flowers Haridwar Rishikesh	65,000	64,000*
HS	13	Lahaul Spiti Chandratal	71,000	69,000*

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4 tour options, 6 to 8 Days

₹79,000 - 87,000*
3 tour options, 8 to 9 Days

₹98,000*
1 tour, 10 Days

₹1,10,000 - 2,95,000*
3 tour options, 6 to 8 Days

₹1,15,000 - 2,09,000*
5 tour options, 5 to 9 Days

₹42,000 - 55,000*
7 tour options, 7 to 9 Days

₹86,000 - 1,43,000*
4 tour options, 7 to 12 Days

₹45,000 - 67,000*
3 tour options, 7 to 11 Days

₹26,000 - 61,000*
8 tour options, 6 to 12 Days

₹49,000 - 64,000*
6 tour options, 6 to 9 Days

₹81,000 - 3,07,000*
2 tour options, 7 to 13 Days

₹35,000 - 43,000*
3 tour options, 5 to 7 Days

₹34,000 - 59,000*
4 tour options, 5 to 7 Days

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Broken footpaths highlight neglect in premium road projects

Poor maintenance of costly Tender SURE footpaths raises concerns, broken slabs and uneven stretches highlight gaps in accountability and long term upkeep

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KAUSHIK JN

Poor footpath condition exposes lack of monitoring and accountability

Roads and footpaths developed under Tender SURE are designed for longer lifespan than traditional roads because these roads need Rs 10 crore to Rs 15 crore per kilometer as against Rs 5 crore to Rs 10 crore cost involved to develop one km of traditional road. However, the poor condition of the footpath on St Mark's Road is anything to go by; it seems the then BBMP authorities who implemented the Tender SURE roads in the city did not bother to ensure quality in the development of the footpaths.

A walk on the footpath on St Mark's Road adjacent to Bowring Institute will make you fume with anger. Broken stone slabs, missing covers on utility chambers and uneven stretch of the footpath reflects the poor quality and apathy of the authorities. It is said that St Mark's Road was developed under Tender SURE at an estimated cost of Rs 10 crore a decade ago and it was the first road developed under the Tender SURE.

Stating that building infrastructure is only half the job, Vinod Jacob, an Urban Strategist, said the true measure of governance lies in effective maintenance, as this TenderSURE road reflects a worrying gap when even basic upkeep of footpaths is neglected. "Such lapses not only compromise usability but also erode public trust. Additionally, the repeated practice of layering roads without removing the existing surface is raising road levels above adjoining buildings, leading to severe water ingress and flooding during monsoons. A truly 'Greater Bengaluru' can only be achieved through rigorous monitoring, periodic maintenance, and clear accountability of those entrusted with our civic assets," he said.

> **"A few marble stones near the bus stop are broken. The authorities are yet to replace the broken slabs to avoid inconvenience to the pedestrians. The uneven footpath poses danger to unwary pedestrians, especially smombies**
> – Suresh R, Pedestrian

Coming down heavily on the poor maintenance of the footpath, Suresh R, a pedestrian, said that a major portion of the footpath is okay but some stretches of the footpaths need immediate attention to avoid inconvenience to the pedestrians, especially senior citizens. "A few marble stones near the bus stop are broken. The authorities are yet to replace the broken slabs to avoid inconvenience to the pedestrians. The uneven footpath poses danger to unwary pedestrians, especially smombies," said Suresh.

Demanding the authorities concerned to fix the problems for the benefit of pedestrians, Sumanth P, a pedestrian, said the width of the footpath was increased while developing St. Mark's Road under Tender SURE. "It will be a great help for pedestrians if the authorities replace broken and missing tiles and stone slabs," he said.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru Central City Corporation Executive Engineer (Shantinagar) said he would investigate the matter. "We have taken up the development of footpaths on other roads. The work has already commenced. I will take measures to fix the footpath at St Mark's Road," he said.

CRIME FILES

Driver asleep at wheel, four killed in crash

Four bus passengers were killed after a private bus driver crashed into a divider on the highway at Puttappanadoddi in Sankalagere village, Channapatna taluk, on the Bengaluru–Mysuru Expressway around 4 am on Monday.

According to police, the driver claimed he was trying to avoid an oncoming vehicle, but investigators suspect he had fallen asleep at the wheel. CCTV footage reviewed by police contradicted the driver's version, indicating negligence. The driver has since been arrested by Channapatna Traffic Police, and a case of negligent driving has been registered against him.

The deceased were identified as Mohammed Farhan, 22, from Calicut; Darshan, 45, from Kalasipalya; Mahi, 45, from Puducherry; and Shakeer, 27, from Adugodi. Police said two victims died on the spot, while the others succumbed to injuries on the way to hospital. **–BMB**

Viral video shows drunk bike stunt

A video of three men riding a two-wheeler recklessly in an inebriated state on BTM Road went viral on Monday, prompting police to review the case. The pillion rider was seen drinking beer and singing while swinging the bottle in the air.

The video sparked debate on social media, with several netizens tagging Bengaluru City Police and demanding strict action. Many called for seizure of the vehicle, cancellation of driving licences, and legal action against the riders.

The incident shows multiple violations, including triple riding without helmets and consumption of alcohol on a public road, posing a serious threat to safety. Such incidents have proved fatal for road users in the past. Police are currently reviewing the case and are expected to take action against those involved. **–BMB**

Police quick action saves assault victim

A 32-year-old man who was brutally assaulted by unidentified assailants in Talacauvery Layout under Amrutahalli Police Station limits was rescued in the early hours of March 21, 2026, following prompt action by police and alert residents.

The incident occurred around 4.36 am when the victim was attacked with iron rods, leaving him severely injured and bleeding. Residents noticed the assault and quickly alerted Namma 112.

The emergency team relayed the information to the Hoysala-174 patrol unit. ASI Prakash KB and AHC Govindaraj rushed to the spot within five minutes and found the victim in critical condition. Without delay, they shifted him to a nearby hospital and ensured he received urgent medical attention.

The incident highlights the vigilance of citizens and quick police response, reflecting commitment to public safety under the Safe City initiative. **–BMB**

Couple held for ₹25 crore job scam

The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have arrested a couple for allegedly cheating hundreds of job seekers by falsely promising employment in courts.

The accused, identified as Jason D'Souza and Lavina, natives of Chikkamagaluru, had been residing in Basaveshwara Nagar for the past decade. Police said multiple cases were earlier registered at Basaveshwara Nagar and Vidhana Soudha police stations before the probe was transferred to the CCB, which tracked them down and arrested them. Preliminary investigation revealed that the duo allegedly defrauded over 500 candidates, collecting nearly ₹25 crore. They targeted unemployed youth and low-paid workers, promising D-group posts in courts, with victims paying between ₹10 lakh and ₹25 lakh. They delayed victims with excuses and continued fraud after securing bail in 2024. **–BMB**

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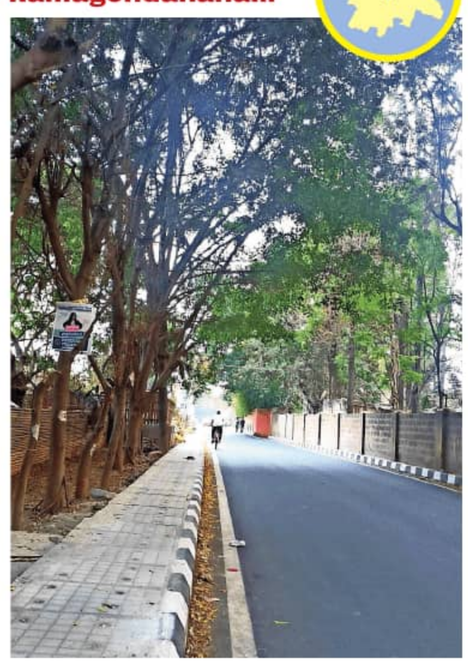
Lane obstruction
JC Nagar

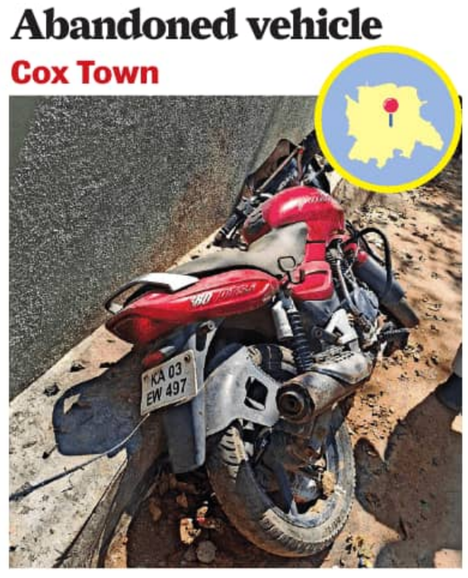
Garbage pile-up near TYS Apartments in JC Nagar has blocked a lane due to irregular clearance, causing serious hygiene concerns and restricting access for residents.

Road danger
Ramagondanahalli



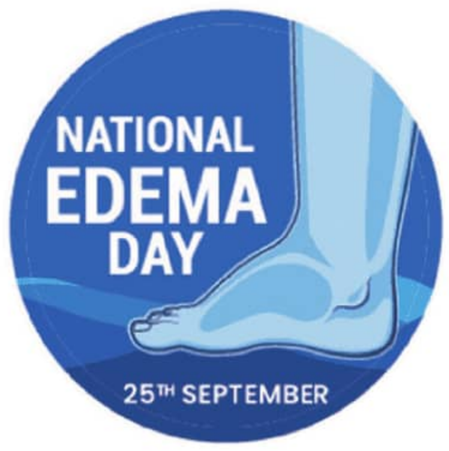
Newly relaid Borewell Road in Ramagondanahalli has triggered rampant overspeeding, raising accident concerns for nearby residents and prompting demands for multiple speed breakers.

Abandoned vehicle
Cox Town



An abandoned bike has been lying unattended for over a year at 1st Cross, Cox Town, Jeevanahalli, causing nuisance and occupying valuable space for residents.

SEE EDEMA, SEEK HELP

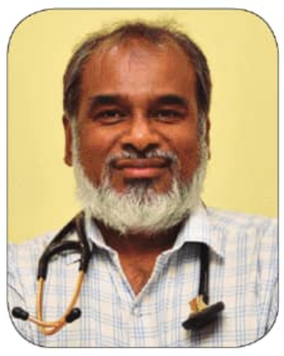


Join the initiative to Stop the Edema March

National Edema Day, 25th September

Edema is a medical term for a type of swelling characterized by fluid accumulation in the body Edema can occur in any part of the body, depending on the underlying causes, ranging from local swelling to swelling throughout the body.

DR.VK SRINIVAS
Cardiologist,
VSH Hospital,
Bangalore



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Hoskote, Bangalore

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What are manifestations of fluid overload?

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Late-night lazy loitering in Bandipur forest sparks alarm

Video of travellers stepping out of vehicles inside tiger reserve sparks probe, officials say repeated warnings and safety concerns ignored

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A video showing commuters alighting from their vehicles inside the Bandipur Forest area to attend to nature's call has put the spotlight on rules being flouted openly, risking lives. The video in a social media post shows a group of men getting out of their vehicles, relieving themselves, and walking around lazily. Following the incident, the Karnataka Forest Department has initiated a preliminary probe into the issue.

"We have taken note of the incident and are looking into the matter," said Bandipur Tiger Reserve director S Prabhakaran. Bandipur administration also told BM that the department is patrolling the forest areas regularly to avoid such incidents. However, every now and then, some commuters step out of their vehicles, acting irresponsibly.

"We have been issuing repeated warnings about a strict ban on alighting from vehicles inside Bandipur. However, some irresponsible citizens continue to repeat this. While daily and regular patrolling is being conducted, we had an important issue related to an elephant in the area on Sunday, and we gathered all the staff for this. The incident must have taken place during that time," said Prabhakaran.

The Karnataka Forest Department imposes a fine of Rs 1,000 if any traveller steps out of their vehicle inside BTR. "While we are patrolling the area regularly, citizens should also act responsibly. Alighting from a vehicle in a forest area can be dangerous," said a KFD official.

However, wildlife activists say such incidents inside BTR have become a regular occurrence.

"This has been happening regularly inside Bandipur Tiger Reserve. I have brought up this issue in the past with the Karnataka Forest Minister. I have written to concerned officials on multiple occasions, highlighting the danger of such recklessness that is going unchecked," said Joseph Hoover, former member of the State Board of Wildlife and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust.

Last year, the state forest department imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 on a traveller who got down from his vehicle inside Bandipur Tiger Reserve when a tusker charged at him. While the person survived with minor scrapes and injuries, the state forest department slapped a fine for getting down in the middle of the forest to click pictures.

The Karnataka Forest Department imposes a fine of Rs 1,000 if any traveller steps out of their vehicle inside the Bandipur Tiger Reserve (file photo)

A viral video showing people leaving vehicles inside Bandipur has triggered an inquiry, with officials and activists warning that careless behaviour in wildlife zones endangers both humans and animals despite strict penalties

Nagarahole census finds 23 endangered vultures

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror
@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

A recent vulture census at Nagarahole National Park has recorded 23 vultures belonging to three species, underlining the urgent need to protect these endangered scavengers. The count, conducted from eight vantage points during morning and evening sessions, identified 14 White-rumped vultures, 2 Long-billed vultures and 7 Red-headed vultures. Officials say exact numbers remain difficult because the birds move across large ranges, but their presence shows the ecosystem still functions, though the population remains fragile.

Across India, vulture numbers have sharply declined, with nearly 70 per cent loss reported between the 1990s and early 2000s. The primary cause was the veterinary drug diclofenac, which proved fatal to vultures feeding on treated animal carcasses. Though the drug now stands banned, threats such as poisoning, habitat pressure, food scarcity and superstition still affect their survival. In South India, Tamil Nadu's forest regions lead with over 200 vultures, while Karnataka's Nagarahole, Bandipur and Biligirirangana Hills together host around 117. Forest officials emphasise that conservation efforts, including possible tagging and continued monitoring, remain essential to preserve these crucial "cleaners of the ecosystem", which play a vital role in maintaining environmental hygiene by consuming animal carcasses.

BM Trippin' Tales

Consumer Connect Initiative

Kashi Yatra scheme draws record pilgrims from Karnataka with subsidy support

Affordable fares, government subsidy and special Bharat Gaurav trains make Kashi pilgrimage the most preferred spiritual journey among Karnataka devotees in recent years

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The dream of visiting Kashi is turning into reality for thousands across Karnataka, with the state-run Kashi Yatra scheme witnessing a sharp rise in demand. In just four years, as many as 17,480 devotees have travelled to the destination through 28 organised trips, making it the most popular among the state's subsidised pilgrimage programmes. Launched in 2022 by the Muzrai Department under the Centre's Bharat Gaurav initiative, the scheme is helping ordinary citizens undertake spiritual journeys to North India at a significantly lower cost.

The state government introduced four major pilgrimage circuits, including Kashi Yatra, Dakshina Yatra, Dwarka Yatra and Puri Jagannath Yatra. Among these, Kashi has clearly emerged as the top choice for devotees. Karnataka also holds the distinction of being the first state in the country to offer Bharat Gaurav train services specifically for Kashi pilgrims. Each special train, equipped with 660 seats, has in-house kitchen facilities, a medical team, CCTV cameras in every coach, and around 100 railway staff to ensure a safe and comfortable journey.

Pilgrims arriving at Kashi temple through the state-supported yatra programme, which provides 5,000 subsidy and organised train journeys for affordable spiritual travel

Officials say the subsidy component is a major draw. Pilgrims are eligible for financial assistance of 5,000 for the Kashi Yatra, making the trip accessible to a wider section of society. The response to other circuits, while steady, has been comparatively lower. Dakshina Yatra has seen 6,783 pilgrims across 11 trips, Dwarka Yatra recorded 563 pilgrims in one trip, and Puri Jagannath Yatra has taken 1,263 devotees over two trips. Still, Kashi continues to dominate in both scale and interest.

The department has also been extending subsidies for other major pilgrimages such as Mansarovar and Char Dham. This year alone, 8,197 Kashi pilgrims, 812 Mansarovar travellers and 4,241 Char Dham pilgrims have applied for financial assistance. For many, these schemes are not just about travel but about fulfilling long-cherished spiritual aspirations that would otherwise remain out of reach due to cost constraints.

A Muzrai department official said, "With growing awareness and word-of-mouth among devotees, demand for the Kashi Yatra is expected to rise further in the coming months. For Karnataka's pilgrims, what was once a distant dream is now a well-organised, affordable journey, blending faith with state support and modern travel comforts."

HC rejects hotel LPG plea citing executive policy limits

Court maintains it cannot intervene in commercial gas shortages driven by global shifts, directing Bengaluru hoteliers to seek administrative relief

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IN HIGH COURT

With six lakh jobs at stake, the bench ruled that judges shouldn't manage energy distribution. It's a tough blow for local eateries now forced to lobby ministers for a steady flame

The Karnataka High Court on Monday declined to intervene in the ongoing shortage of commercial LPG cylinders impacting the hotel sector, observing that courts exercising jurisdiction under Article 226 cannot step into matters that fall squarely within executive policy, particularly when they are shaped by global developments. Hearing a petition filed by the Bangalore Hotels Association, a single-judge bench of Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum said that issues relating to energy supply are intertwined with international factors, logistical constraints, and administrative decisions, making them unsuitable for judicial oversight.

"Article 226 of the Constitution, though with wide application, cannot be utilised to supplant executive wisdom," the court stated while pronouncing its order. The bench underscored that constitutional courts are not designed to continuously monitor shifting global energy scenarios or second-guess decisions taken by the government in managing distribution. It also took note of the steps being taken by authorities to allocate LPG supplies across states in what it described as an equitable manner.

Referring to a similar matter, the court said it was in agreement with the approach adopted by the Bombay High Court, which had earlier declined to grant relief in a comparable situation. "This court is in respectful agreement with the decision of the Bombay High Court Division Bench. The state government is actively seized of the matter. For appropriate measures, the petitioner association can approach the concerned minister with their concerns," the order recorded.

During the hearing, Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union government, submitted that fluctuations in LPG availability are often driven by external global events that are beyond the control of domestic authorities. He argued that such matters should be left to the executive, which is better placed to respond to them. The court found merit in this submission while clarifying that its concern was limited to ensuring that whatever supply is available is distributed fairly. The Solicitor General also assured that any malpractice in distribution would be dealt with firmly.

Counsel for the petitioners, Satish K, contended that Karnataka's allocation of commercial LPG cylinders was significantly lower than that of neighbouring states. He pointed out that Kerala receives around 4,200 cylinders per day and Tamil Nadu about 8,500, whereas Karnataka gets only about 1,000 cylinders for commercial use. The petition arose out of an acute shortage being faced by hotels and eateries in Bengaluru, with the association warning that thousands of establishments could be forced to shut if the situation persists.

The association highlighted that the city has over 40,000 hotels employing nearly six lakh workers, and that the sector also supports allied industries dealing with perishable goods such as milk and vegetables. The petitioners also challenged the Natural Gas (Supply) Order, 2026, issued on March 9, which capped the total daily supply of commercial LPG cylinders in the state at 7,000, of which only 1,000 were earmarked for hotels, restaurants, and roadside eateries. According to the petitioners, this restriction has severely disrupted supply chains and placed the industry under significant strain. While disposing of the plea, the court directed the association to approach the State's Food and Civil Supplies Minister for relief, noting that the executive is already engaged with the issue.

WAR UPDATES

Trump says Hormuz Strait reopening soon

United States President Donald Trump on Monday said the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global shipping route, will be "open very soon" amid the conflict in West Asia and suggested that he envisions it being managed jointly by the US and Iran.

Speaking to reporters, Trump said the strait will be "open very soon" if ongoing negotiations with Tehran continue successfully. He added that he and the newly appointed Supreme Leader of Iran, Mojtaba Khamenei, will "jointly" control the critical shipping and global energy route. "It'll be jointly controlled. Me and the Ayatollah, whoever the Ayatollah is, whoever the next Ayatollah is," the US President added. The Strait of Hormuz handles about 15 million barrels per day of crude oil and 5 million barrels per day of oil products, nearly 25 percent of global seaborne oil trade. **–ANI**

Govt restores export tax relief scheme

In view of the evolving geopolitical situation due to the Iran war and its implications for maritime trade, the Centre has decided to restore the rates and value caps under the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme for all eligible export products with effect from March 23, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Monday.

This step is intended to provide timely support to Indian exporters facing higher freight costs and war-related trade risks due to disruptions in the Gulf and the wider West Asia maritime corridor, the statement said. The restored rates will be the same as those in force on February 22 this year, reversing the earlier 50 per cent restriction that the government imposed on February 23. **–IANS**

State drafts new digital policy to curb student screen addiction

Health and education departments collaborate with NIMHANS to introduce structured digital well-being guidelines and age-appropriate social media literacy for students

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In response to growing concerns over excessive screen time and its impact on young minds, the Department of Health and Family Welfare, along with the Karnataka State Mental Health Authority (KSMHA), the Department of Education, and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, has released a draft policy for responsible digital use among students. This comes after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced a ban on social media usage for children below 16 years of age during the state budget.

The policy arrives as studies in India suggest that nearly 25% of adolescents exhibit signs of internet addiction, often accompanied by increased anxiety, sleep disturbances, and attention-related issues. Experts warn that unregulated technology use now acts as a key contributor to declining mental well-being among school-going children. To combat this, the draft policy aims to foster digital well-being, emotional regulation, and greater awareness of screen time. It targets a wide group, including high school students (Classes 9–10), pre-university students (Classes 11–12), teachers, and parents.

At its core, the policy proposes a structured model that focuses on improving digital awareness, building peer support systems, and enabling the early identification of problematic usage. It outlines a three-pronged approach involving state government directives to schools, dedicated teacher training programmes, and structured communication between schools and parents. As part of these recommendations, schools must integrate digital well-being and social media literacy into existing life skills, value education, and ICT curricula. These age-appropriate lessons will cover responsible digital behaviour, online safety, privacy, and the balance between online and offline activities.

Kids being addicted to screens face new limits as the policy recommends capping daily recreational use to just one hour

A key component of the draft is the implementation of school-level Digital Use Policies. Each institution must develop guidelines addressing cyberbullying and digital misconduct, while clearly defining how teachers should moderate students' digital exposure. Importantly, the policy recommends limiting recreational screen time to no more than one hour per day outside of academic requirements. Schools are also encouraged to provide counselling support for safe and mindful technology use. To strengthen monitoring, the policy suggests creating a national digital health framework to track healthy technology practices.

As internet addiction hits a record high among adolescents, the state's proactive framework shifts the focus from mindless scrolling to mindful living through teacher training, parent workshops, and offline engagement

Recognising early warning signs remains a critical focus. The policy encourages schools to train staff to identify behavioural red flags such as declining attention spans, increased stress, loneliness, and social isolation. Early intervention mechanisms will address these concerns before they escalate. Furthermore, the policy calls for the promotion of offline activities and healthier daily routines through mandatory sensitisation programmes.

As part of capacity building, experts from NIMHANS and the Health Department will conduct a one-day Teacher Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on digital detox. This training equips educators with tools to promote balanced technology use in both classrooms and their personal lives. Parents also serve as key stakeholders. The policy encourages families to create healthier digital environments at home by setting routines, enforcing screen-time rules, and prioritising open conversations about safety. It stresses the importance of fostering offline bonding and encouraging children to engage in face-to-face peer interactions without the interference of screens.

Man vanishes with roommate's phone, drains ₹4.45 lakh

A 26-year-old man has filed a complaint with police after his roommate allegedly stole his mobile phone and siphoned off ₹4.45 lakh through unauthorised online transactions.

The complainant, residing in a hostel in Koramangala, reported that the incident occurred in the early hours of March 6. He last checked his phone around 2.30 am before going to sleep. When he woke up at about 8.30 am, both his phone and his roommate, Naveen Vemula, were missing. The stolen device was used to access multiple mobile applications and banking services without consent. Police said the accused, being in the same room, allegedly knew the mobile password and gained access to bank accounts and financial apps, carrying out transactions across platforms and transferring money to unknown accounts. **BMB**

Woman murdered, body dumped in garbage dump

In a shocking incident, the body of a 45-year-old woman was found in a garbage dump near Mylasandra bus stand on Kengeri Main Road on Monday morning.

The deceased was identified as Kempamma, a resident of Mahadeshwara Layout in Kengeri. Police said passersby noticed the body lying in a heap of garbage behind the bus stand and alerted the emergency helpline. Kengeri police rushed to the spot and began investigation.

Preliminary findings suggest the woman was murdered elsewhere and her body was later dumped at the location to destroy evidence. Police suspect she was killed after being struck on the head with a blunt object.

A Forensic Science Laboratory team, along with dog squad and fingerprint experts, examined the scene and collected evidence. CCTV footage from nearby areas is being reviewed to trace the accused. **BMB**

Bill to curb honour crimes, preserve manuscripts passed

The Karnataka Assembly on Monday passed two key bills, the Karnataka Freedom of Choice in Marriage and Prevention and Prohibition of Crimes in the name of Honour and Tradition Bill, 2026, and the Karnataka Jnana Bhandar Manuscripts and Digitisation Bill, 2026.

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil said the marriage-related bill was intended to address social issues such as honour crimes and to reinforce constitutional values.

The Karnataka Jnana Bhandar Manuscripts and Digitisation Bill, 2026 is to preserve ancient manuscripts scattered across the state. **PTI**

Risking lives, for a few likes

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

instead police issued a strict warning and required an apology video. Similarly around 15 weeks ago, a group of youths sparked outrage after a video showed them scaling a barrier at Nandi Hills to avoid paying the ₹20 entry fee, risking their safety.

Speaking on the courier prank issue, a senior police officials said cases are being registered against content that promotes public nuisance in the name of social media fame, including hate speech, cyberbullying, language-based disputes, videos featuring banned weapons that may create public fear, and dangerous stunts such as wheelies, all of which are under close watch. They added that social media also plays a crucial role in tracking and apprehending offenders, including rowdy elements. But In this particular case, officials noted that the victim had voluntarily participated in the prank, which was intended to highlight the lack of seating in buses and trains and the rising cost of travel.

Dangerous stunts & deaths

Tragedy hit when 15-year-old Nameesh Sangalad was attempting to film an "action brake" reel died in Hubballi on March 19, when his electric bike collided head-on with a speeding car during the stunt. Last Saturday, a video went viral showing a white Lamborghini performing high-speed drifting and donut stunts at Anil Kumble Circle on MG Road between 2 am and 3 am. Taking serious note of the incident, Cubbon Park Traffic Police registered an FIR under Section 281 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for rash and negligent driving and later seized the luxury vehicle.

Last Friday addressing the media, Responding ro the deaths of two minors in Hubballi, Karnataka Home Minister Dr. G Parameshwara addressed the growing concern of youngsters performing dangerous bike wheeling for social media reels, acknowledging that while some do it for "enjoyment," it often turns fatal and leads to reckless behaviour, even on Bengaluru streets.

The Home Minister added that in Bengaluru, police are actively monitoring wheeling incidents. However, many youths carry out these stunts during early morning hours, making enforcement challenging. To address this, the police are not only focusing on enforcement but also prioritising awareness campaigns to educate young people about the risks involved, aiming to bring about a behavioural change.

Police officials observed a growing trend of youngsters performing dangerous stunts such as wheelies and zigzag driving to gain social media attention. In one such incident, a speeding car crashed into parked two-wheelers on Anekal–Mirza Road. In another case, a viral video showed a biker performing a wheelie near Manyata Tech Park and Thanisandra with a woman riding pillion; neither of them was wearing a helmet, and the vehicle's number plate was suspected to be fake.

Unending cycle

Speaking about trends such as risky public stunts, psychologist Lakshmi Shashikumar, noted that while technological advancement has its benefits, the lack of balance is a growing concern. "This need for validation and emotional reliance on social media offers little real value and instead interferes with natural developmental processes. Many individuals are pushed into engaging in dangerous behaviour due to peer pressure or the lure of short-lived online rewards, often putting their safety at risk. The lack of meaningful, personal emotional

connections is further deepening dependence on short-form content," she said.

Shashikumar further adds that the "reel trap" has evolved into a modern coping mechanism and an escape from reality. "More people are now turning to social media in search of emotional connections, with digital validation steadily becoming integrated into their daily lives. Short-form videos, in particular, are designed to tap into the brain's dopamine-driven reward system, conditioning users to stay engaged as algorithms continuously supply highly stimulating content," she said.

Shashikumar also cautioned that the constant pursuit of validation on social media can contribute to stress, anxiety, mood swings, behavioural changes, dissatisfaction, burnout, and even perfectionist tendencies.

"This trend cuts across age groups, as the desire for rewards is universal. At the same time, excessive consumption of short-form content may diminish empathy, kindness, and awareness of safety, with individuals gradually losing their sense of identity while chasing unrealistic expectations. However, the extent of the impact may differ based on personal goals and individual experiences," she explained.

Parents, guardians of minor drivers too in radar

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

three years. In percentage terms, this translates to a 163.3% surge.

Officials said strict enforcement measures are being taken to curb the practice, which poses a major safety threat on city roads. The Home Minister told the House that police routinely book minors found riding or driving vehicles without a licence under provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act and related laws. Once caught, the vehicles involved can be seized and legal proceedings initiated, with minors being produced before the court along with the adults responsible for them.

Authorities have also made it clear that accountability will not stop with the underage driver. Police have warned that parents, guardians or vehicle owners who permit minors to operate vehicles will face legal action for allowing an unlicenced person to drive.

The traffic police have also stepped up enforcement against dangerous practices such as wheeling, which is often carried out by young riders. Locations where such stunts frequently take place have been identified and special patrol teams have been deployed to monitor these stretches and take immediate action.

In addition, officials said awareness programmes are being conducted through traffic training and road safety institutes to educate students and young riders about traffic rules and the dangers of underage driving.

Traffic police book 756 cases in week-long drunk driving, speeding crackdown

Bengaluru Traffic Police conducted a week-long special enforcement drive against drunk driving and overspeeding from March 16, registering a total of 756 cases across the city.

The drive, carried out by personnel from 53 traffic police stations, aimed to curb violations and improve road safety. During the crackdown on drunk driving, officials checked 45,568 vehicles and registered 634 cases against motorists found driving under the influence of alcohol.

In a parallel operation against overspeeding, police registered 122 cases and collected fines amounting to `1.29 lakh. Officials said the initiative was part of ongoing efforts to reduce accidents caused by reckless driving and intoxication. **BMB**

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ruchika Jain H, D/O Hansraj Jain, Puducherry-605011, have changed my name to Ruchika Jain vide affidavit dated 23/03/2026.

I, Neil Mulchandani, S/o Rinku Mulchandani, R/o Brigade Harmony 503 Whitefield Bengaluru, have changed my name to Neil Rinku Mulchandani

I, Chetanbhai Deepakbhai Mehta S/O, Deepak Mehta R/o Medahalli, Bangalore - 560049 have changed my name to Chetan Deepak Mehta for all purposes.

I, Shashank Varshney R/o 274 Mico Layout 1st Stage 6th Main Road Arekere have changed my minor son's name from Aksh Varshney to Gauransh Varshney for all purposes.

I, Aisha Ahmed d/o Mukhtar Ahmed and shawer Afza R/o No. 776 Raga, 14th Main VHBCS layout, veerannapalya Nagawara. AC post Bengaluru 560045 have changed my name as Bi Bi Ayesha.

I Yeshodhara R/o No. 47, 12th cross, Wilson Gardens, Bangalore - 560027, have changed my name to N L Yeshodhara.

I, Purviben W/O, Chetan Deepak Mehta R/o Medahalli, Bangalore - 560049 have changed my name to Purvi Mehta for all purposes.

I, Syed Gani Sahib R/o No 2/6 Next to Eidgha Sulaiman Manzil Boopasandra Bangalore 560094 Have Changed My Name to Syed Gani for All Purposes.

I, Nimmy Samuel, D/o Late P S Samuel (W/o George Moothedan) residing at 2668, 36A Cross, 9th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore pin 560069, change my name from Nimmy Samuel to Nimmy George

I Keerthy V S/o Vasudev L R/at 9, Near Royal Mart, Uttarahalli Main Road, Vallabhnagar, Subramanyapura post Bangalore 560061 have changed my name as Keerthi vide affidavit dated 24/03/2026 before notary Nijagunardhaya T.C.

I Shankara M R/o No 36 1st Main road Netaji Badavane Vijayanagar Bengaluru-40 Have changed my name to Shankar Mahadevappa.

I, Janardana K R R/o No.11, 5th B main, Maddurama Lyt, Sunkadakatte, Bengaluru 560091 have changed my name to Janardhana Kailancha Ramashetty. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

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HEALTH TIP: If you're prone to bloating, try swapping carbonated drinks for still water, warm herbal teas

Turmeric milk works effectively against colds and coughs and relieves sore throat

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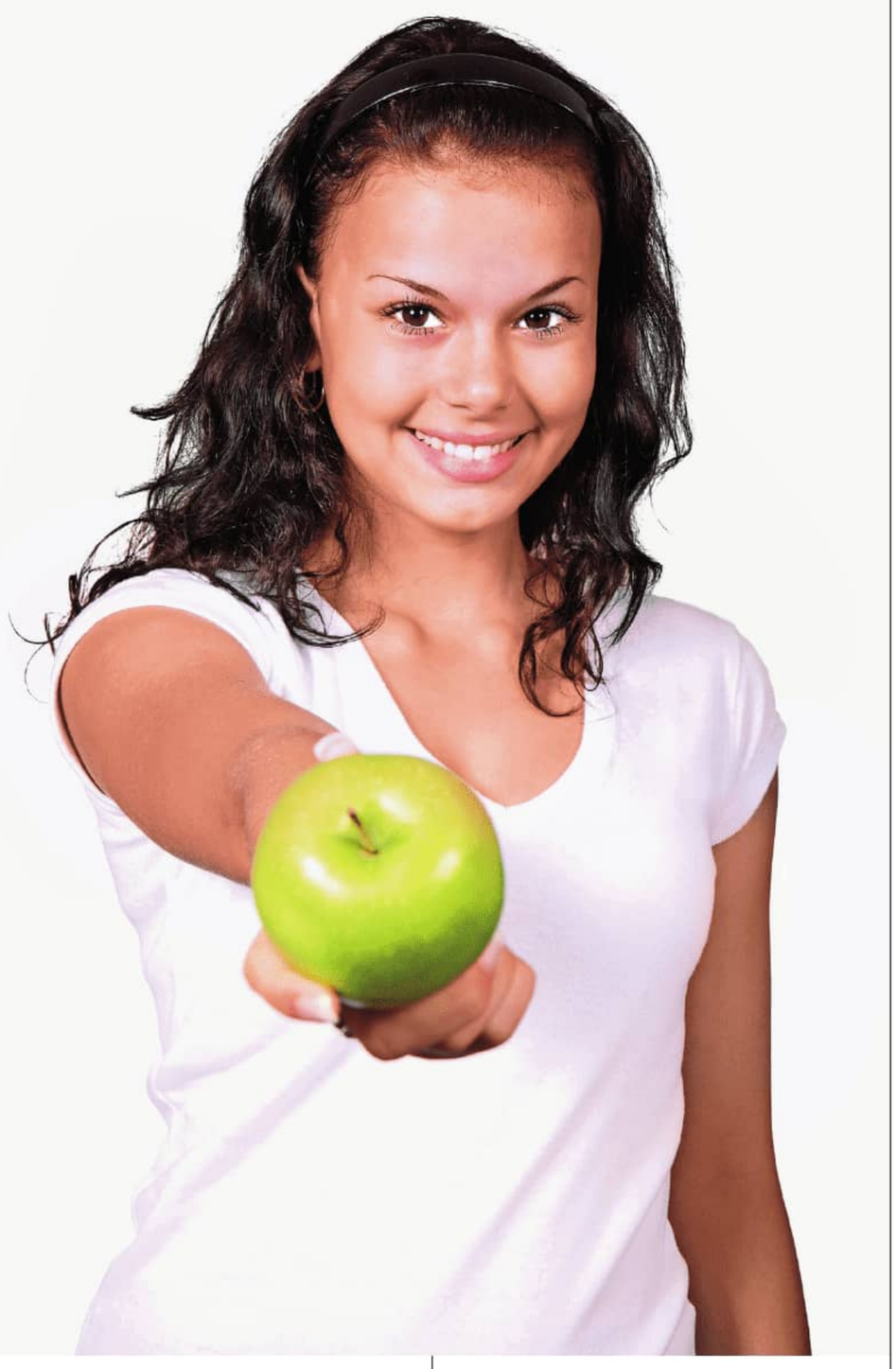
DON'T JUST POP A PILL

As demand for GLP-1 pills and shots surges, healthy habits are still key



Whether they're using weekly shots or daily pills, more Americans than ever are turning to anti-obesity drugs to lose weight and boost health.

About 1 in 8 US adults say they are taking a GLP-1 drug, according to a recent survey by the health research group KFF.

Just since January, more than 6,00,000 prescriptions have been written for Novo Nordisk's new Wegovy pill, the company said. Early analysis suggests that more than a third of users are new to the drugs, according to Truveta, a healthcare data company.

But medication alone isn't the answer, experts caution. It also takes lifestyle changes — healthy diet, exercise, adequate sleep and stress management — to reap the biggest benefits from the drugs known as GLP-1s.

"The biggest mistake people make with GLP-1 medications is thinking the prescription is the treatment," said Dr. Katherine Saunders, an obesity medicine expert at Weill Cornell Medicine and co-founder of FlyteHealth, a weight-loss treatment company.

GLP-1s can spur weight loss and health benefits on their own, but the effects are larger and last longer when the drugs are combined with lifestyle changes, a recent review of nearly three dozen studies found.

Here's what experts say you should know about GLP-1 drugs and healthy habits

Obesity is a big driver of chronic disease, including conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. But the focus should be overall health and not just the numbers on a scale, said Dr. Jody Dushay, an endocrinologist and obesity expert at Harvard Medical School.

"Health is what you eat, how much you move your body, what is your blood sugar, what is your blood pressure, what is your cholesterol," she said. "All of those things are really important."

The GLP-1 drugs work by targeting hormones in the gut and brain that slow digestion and target appetite and feelings of fullness. That effect "levels the playing field," said Saunders, making it easier to adopt healthy habits like eating less and moving more.

"Social media and advertising sometimes create the impression that these medications are a quick fix, but obesity is a complex, chronic, progressive disease" that requires ongoing medical management, she added.

The clinical trials of anti-obesity medications like Wegovy and Zepbound included structured lifestyle programs along with the medication, which are advised along with every new prescription.

That results not only in significant weight loss, but improved health markers.

A February study of more than 98,000 U.S. military veterans found that those who used a GLP-1 and adhered to six to eight healthy habits had a 43% lower risk of serious cardiovascular events such as stroke and heart attack than those who didn't use the drugs and followed three or fewer such habits.

Lifestyle habits "can substantially amplify the benefits of modern medications" noted Dr. Frank Hu, a lead author and chair of the nutrition department at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

To maximize the benefits of GLP-1s and reduce potential side effects like nausea, vomiting, constipation and muscle loss, Dushay and other experts offer specific advice.

Maintain muscle by eating 20 grams to 30 grams of protein per meal, which could include fish, poultry, yogurt and beans. Eat more fiber and drink more water — as much as 8 to 12 cups a day. If heartburn or nausea is a problem, avoid fried foods and spicy foods, and don't lie down after meals.

Aim for 150 minutes of aerobic exercise a week, or, ideally, about an hour a day. Add in 30 minutes of strength training two or three times a week, such as lifting weights or using resistance bands.

Get enough sleep — seven to nine hours a day for a healthy adult. Take steps to reduce mental and emotional stress.

Finally, check in with a health care provider about your progress. The GLP-1 drugs can have rare but serious side effects, the experts noted.

"Someone really does need to keep track of: What is the pace of your weight loss? What are your side effects? And not just mailing you a prescription every month," Dushay said. —AP

MIRRORLIGHTS

Study finds new biomarker for cognitive symptoms of schizophrenia

A study has found a new biomarker of schizophrenia, which could also serve as a drug target for treating cognitive symptoms such as disorganised thinking or executive function.

Schizophrenia is a mental health disorder marked by an impaired ability to perceive and interpret reality and can involve delusions and disorganised thinking, or cognitive symptoms.

Researchers from the US' Northwestern University said that schizophrenia medications treat symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions, but do little for cognitive symptoms.

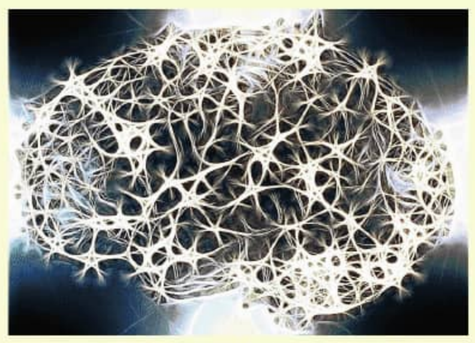
"A lot of people with schizophrenia cannot integrate well into society because of these cognitive deficits," author Peter Penzes, professor of neuroscience, pharmacology and psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Northwestern University's school of medicine, said.

"Our discovery could solve these challenges by establishing the basis of a revolutionary and completely novel treatment strategy through a tandem biomarker-peptide therapeutic approach," Penzes said.

The study, published in the journal Neuron, analysed the cerebral spinal fluid -- a clear liquid surrounding and protecting the brain and spinal cord -- of more than 100 schizophrenia patients and healthy people.

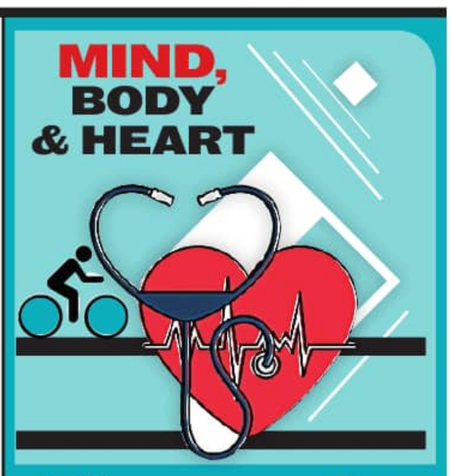
The researchers identified a previously unknown, freely circulating form of a brain protein called 'Cacna2d1' -- levels of the protein were reduced among patients with schizophrenia, compared to the healthy participants, resulting in overactive or overexcited brain circuits.

The team created a synthetic



version of the protein, named 'SEAD1' and tested it in a mouse model of schizophrenia.

A single injection of SEAD1 into the animals' brains was found to correct both the abnormal brain activity and behavioural problems linked to the disorder, with few notable negative side effects. —PTI



All you need to know about...

Acid reflux tips

Pause Between Bites
Many people eat continuously without giving the stomach time to respond. This is one of the most overlooked eating habits, says Dr Monica B Sood, CEO of Navjivan Health Service. She explains this "continuous conveyor belt eating" floods the stomach faster than it can release digestive enzymes. Just placing your spoon or fork down for a few seconds between bites creates micro-pauses that help acid levels balance naturally.

Post-Meal Posture
What you do after eating matters just as much as what you eat. According to Dr Monica, posture plays a crucial role in preventing reflux. She notes that sitting cross-legged for about ten minutes after meals helps naturally straighten the spine and reduces pressure on the lower oesophageal sphincter which is the valve that prevents acid from travelling upward.

Breathing Before Bed
Most people are aware that one should not immediately lie down after the meal but have you thought about what one should do? She highlights that slow diaphragmatic breathing before bedtime helps calm the nervous system. Just three minutes of deep breathing can lower cortisol, relax abdominal tension and reduce nighttime reflux episodes.

Water Temperature Trick
Warm water supports stomach relaxation, while small sips of cooler water prevent excessive stomach distension.

Elevated Position
Many people stack pillows to manage nighttime reflux, but this often bends the neck rather than lifting the torso. The expert recommends a more effective approach: raising the entire head end of the bed by four to six inches. This gentle tilt allows gravity to prevent acid from travelling upward and is considered one of the most under-utilised non-pharmacological remedies for reflux.

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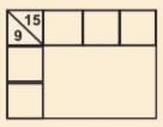
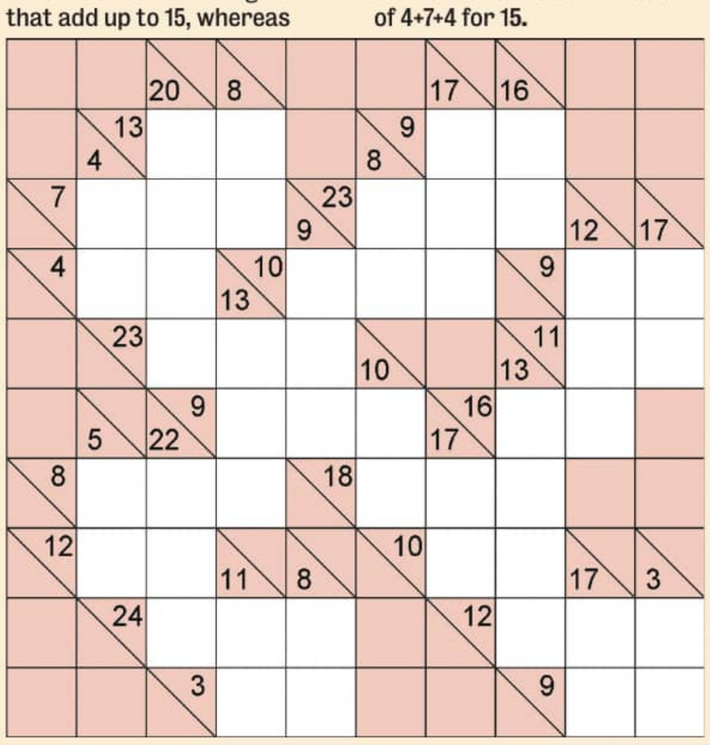
Kakuro

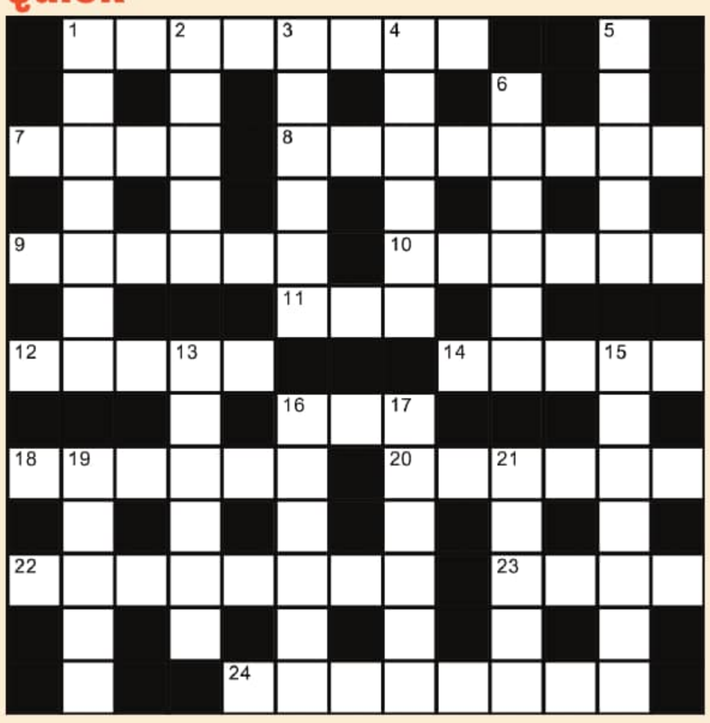
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Social butterfly (8)
7 Asian desert (4)
8 Arraigning or impeaching (8)
9 Martial art (4,2)
10 Most recent (6)
11 Before or "earlier" as a prefix (3)
12 Verdant (5)
14 Hurts; injures (5)
16 Indochinese language (3)
18 Freely available or accessible (4,2)
20 Cylinder for holding thread (6)
22 Strive (8)
23 Her basilica is located in Shivajinagar (4)
24 Strict disciplinarian (8)

DOWN

1 Droplet (7)
2 Passing away (5)
3 ___ __ to the hilt : give full support? (4,2)
4 Lacking the power (6)
5 Explosive sounds (5)
6 Queen of Crime ___ Christie (6)
13 Cheese dish of Swiss origin (6)
15 French detective (7)
16 Covered porch (6)
17 Take exception (6)
19 Russia's Vladimir ___ (5)
21 Mr Irani of Bollywood? (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: O EQUALS U

TK EUBC RKO PBX, ESCU EUBC RKO UBLN, EUNQN RKO BQN.

Linemaro

Please stop looking so attractive, I'm trying to stop liking you

Mindchow

Good management consists in showing average people how to do the work of superior people

Joke of the day

Chaos Theory is a new theory invented by scientists panicked by the thought that the public were beginning to understand the old ones

Loop

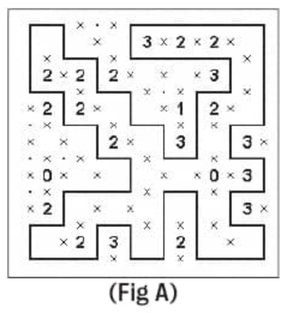
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

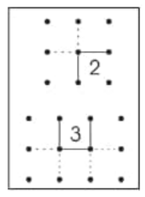
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

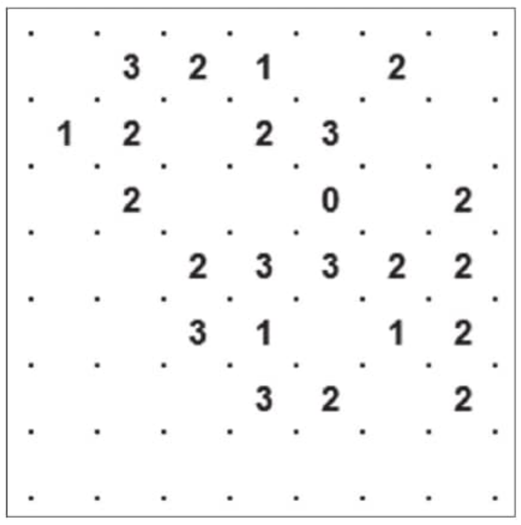
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



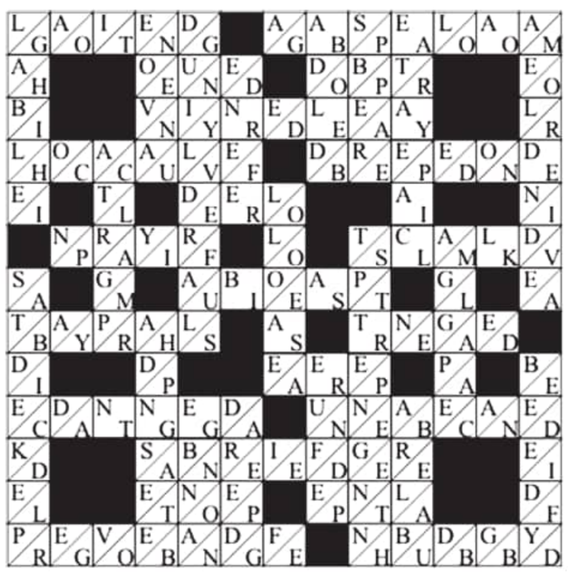
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5 K
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 Mr Sik; 6 Rupee; 7 Eaten; 8 Antic; 9 Share

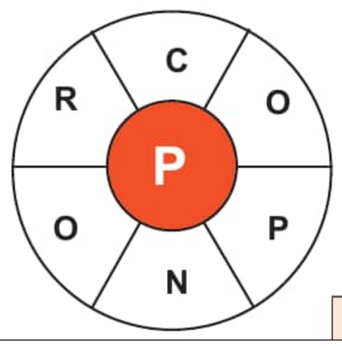
DOWN

1 Apers; 2 N chum; 3 At ire; 4 Irate; 5 Knees

Mensapuzzle

Which number completes the middle star?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

03 Average; 04 Good; 05 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	9						7	
		8	6		7	2		
		7		1		4		
9	3		1		5		2	8
7								3
6	2		3		4		9	5
		9		5		3		
		6	4		8	9		
	5						1	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 5

3 9 7 4

Medium = 1

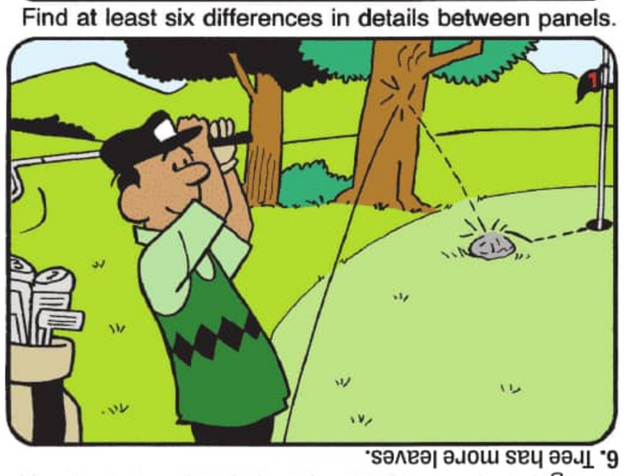
3 4 4 2

Hard = 6

1 5 6 5

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

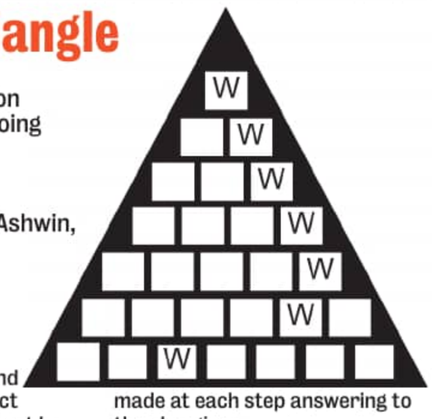


Differences: 1. Sweater is longer. 2. Club is longer. 3. Flag is lower. 4. Mountain is different. 5. Branch is missing. 6. Tree has more leaves.

Riddler

Can you decipher these common Christmas Carols?
1. Happiness to the Global Ecosystem
2. Small male percussionist
3. I am experiencing nocturnal visions of a colorless holiday
4. Festoon the Corridors

Alpha triangle



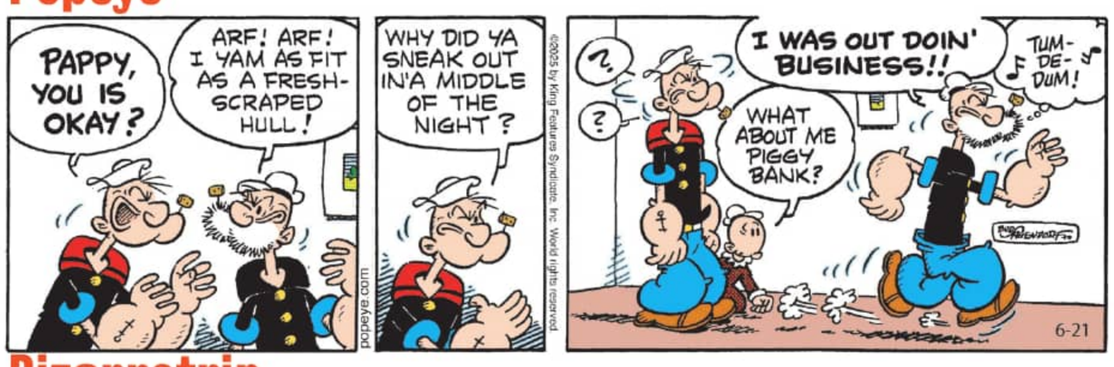
1 Watt, abbr.
2 Painful expression
3 Difficult for limboing
4 Misfortune
5 Downstairs
6 Nudges
7 Bunrah, Warne, Ashwin, et al

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


PAPPY, YOU IS OKAY?
ARF! ARF! I YAM AS FIT AS A FRESH-SCRAPED HULL!
WHY DID YA SNEAK OUT IN'A MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
I WAS OUT DOIN' BUSINESS!!
TUM-DE-DUM!
WHAT ABOUT ME PIGGY BANK?
6-21
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

Cain, my son, why must you refer to yourself in the third person?
Cain does it because Cain is literally THE third person.
Wayno & Piraro 12-11-25
Dist. by King Features
BIZARRO.COM
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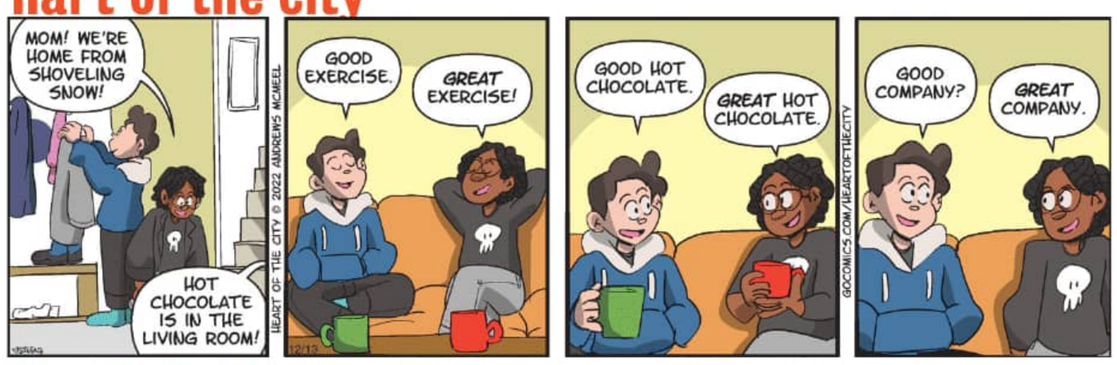
Diamond Lil

Hart of the city



Crankshaft

YOU'RE NOT FROM THE NORTH POLE!
NO... YOU'RE RIGHT...
I'M FROM SANTA DOMINGO!
MONTONI'S
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BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books
12-11

Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Sensitivity becomes a strength today. Love deepens through emotional honesty. Career success comes from understanding others' needs. Financial clarity improves with careful attention. Travel soothes your spirit. Home feels nurturing and calm. By honouring your feelings without losing focus, you create balance that supports both personal fulfilment and steady professional progress.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Major developments unfold soon, so stay open to every possibility. Change benefits you, even if unclear initially. Relax control, move with events, and trust guidance shaping your path ahead gracefully.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Stop over explaining your expertise; it breeds doubt. Earn trust through action. Demonstrate capability consistently, let results speak loudly, and people will believe you without persuasion naturally over time through practice.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

What seems like an early setback transforms positively later, so remain calm. Accept circumstances as they come; ultimately you'll still reach your primary objective successfully with patience, confidence and persistence intact.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Tough challenges arise soon, but you're capable of overcoming all of them. Increased effort now reduces their intensity later and strengthens confidence, resilience, and momentum through action focus determination discipline.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Options feel limited currently, yet long-term outlook remains excellent. Keep faith alive; the right opportunity arrives perfectly timed, supported by belief and persistence patience hope vision trust effort focus consistency.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

If you desire something strongly this week, you'll find a way. Some toes may be stepped on, causing resentment, but popularity isn't the goal achievement matters more than approval here.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Achieve your aims by supporting others' needs too. Mutual benefit creates harmony; when everyone gains, cooperation strengthens outcomes, trust, balance, and shared success through fairness empathy collaboration patience respect alignment.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Focused attention for twenty-four hours brings rapid progress. Your mind is powerful; concentrated effort now can achieve results that usually take far longer through clarity, discipline, belief, commitment, confidence, and willpower.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

An argument could become costly if you insist you're right. Truth has perspectives; compromise and understanding prevent losses greater than proving a point through dialogue empathy restraint patience humility awareness.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

A stalled project suggests pausing to recharge. Rest restores physical, mental, and emotional energy. Constant motion isn't required; slowing down improves clarity and effectiveness, focus balance, health perspective, patience renewal.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

Opportunities multiply this week, demanding selectivity. Choose one clear goal and commit fully; consistency beats frequent changes and scattered effort through focus discipline planning patience confidence clarity intention strategy follow-through.

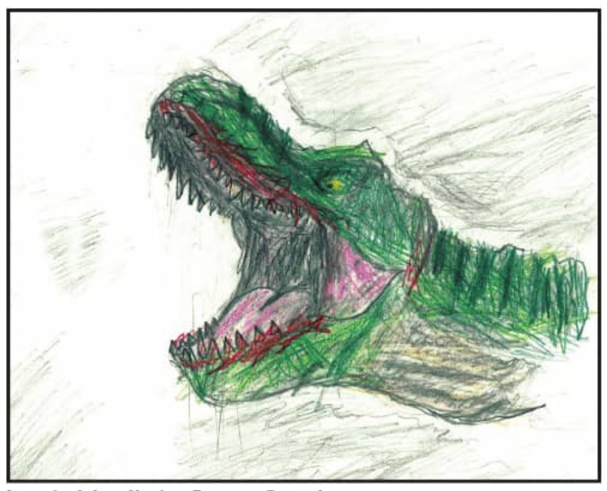
Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Sensitivity rises soon, and irritation is understandable. Don't let emotions cloud judgment; staying composed protects your advantage and prevents others benefiting from reactions through calm self-control awareness patience discipline balance.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE

Ayush Potdar, Bengaluru



Ignacio Johan Xavier, 5 years, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

= (72!i – 720i) / 719i
= 719i(72i*720 -720) / 719i
= (72i * 720 – 720)
= 720(72i – 1)
= 720°2
= 518400

BULL'S EYE

coop, crop, poop, poor, POPCORN

STRIKE OUT

FAST FIVE

S	M	I	R	K
P	U	R	E	E
E	N	A	T	E
A	C	T	I	N
R	H	E	A	S

QUOTE UNCODE

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE

10. The values of the points of the central star equal the sums of the values of the corresponding points of the left and right hand stars.

RIDDLER

1. Joy to the World,
2. Little Drummer Boy,
3. I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas &
4. Deck the Halls

SUDOKU

1	9	2	8	4	3	5	7	6
5	4	8	6	9	7	2	3	1
3	6	7	5	1	2	4	8	9
9	3	4	1	7	5	6	2	8
7	8	5	9	2	6	1	4	3
6	2	1	3	8	4	7	9	5
8	7	9	2	5	1	3	6	4
2	1	6	4	3	8	9	5	7
4	5	3	7	6	9	8	1	2

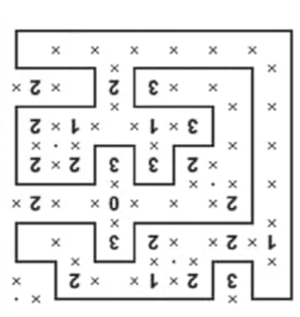
ALPHA TRIANGLE

W, Ow, Low, Blow, Below, Elbows, Bowlers.

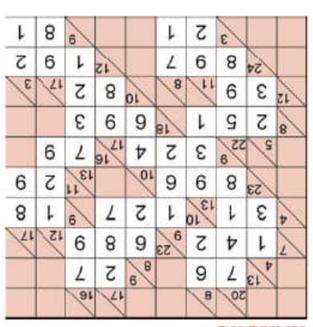
GO FIGURE

3 + 4 – 9 + 7 = 5
Easy
Medium
3 – 2 + 4 – 4 = 1
Hard
6 + 5 x 1 – 5 = 6

LOOP



KAKURO



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Fear factor— Ajay Devgn reunites with 'Sardaarji' director Rohit Jugraj for epic horror flick, July shoot ahead

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Countdown to premiere

Advocate-turned-kickboxer Sharanappa makes his Sandalwood debut as a producer with the Kannada film Yaava Mohana Murali Kareyithu. Sharanappa, who won a medal in a kickboxing competition in Russia, said he invested in the film to encourage and support his daughter Prakruthi. The trailer, unveiled recently, has already gained popularity among Kannada audiences. The film is scheduled to release on March 27.

Sharanappa said the dog, Rocky, died in a road accident while the film was in its final stages. "We zeroed in on a dog (Rana) and waited for a few weeks to recommence the shooting. I am sure of this movie becoming popular among pet lovers. It also has all elements including sentiment, suspense, thriller and emotions. I am contemplating supporting a movie on kickboxing in the near future. I want to give space for newcomers to showcase their talent. I will provide the data on two more movies shortly," said Sharanappa.

Director Vishwas Krishna highlighted that he makes debut as a director with this movie. "I will never forget my journey with Rocky, the dog, during the filming of this movie. This movie is worth watching for family audiences," the director said.

Calendar on April 3

The trailer of the forthcoming Kannada film Calendar was released recently. The movie is expected to hit theatres on April 3. Adarsha Gunduraj, who played the lead in Swartha Rathna, takes on the protagonist's role in Calendar. Gunduraj, besides playing the lead, is also supporting the film.

"I played the doctor in the movie that revolves around women. The movie Calendar is worth a watch for family audiences. Nivishka and Sushmitha are the heroines while Malshree played a special role," said Gunduraj.

He said that the movie is expected to be dubbed into Hindi. "We have organised a media meet in Mumbai as part of the promotional activities," he said.

The movie also features Ramesh Indira, Pramod Shetty, Prakash Thuminad, Suchendra Prasad, and Chandraprabha.

Speaking on the occasion, director Naveen Shakthi said that Calendar is his maiden movie as a director. "I have been associated with theatre for quite a long time and took part in more than 5000 street plays. I am lucky to get the opportunity to direct this movie," the director said.

Shraddha turns cheerleader

Shraddha Kapoor turned cheerleader for her maternal aunt and actress Padmini Kolhapure, who showcased her vocal prowess on social media as she sang the song 'Madhuban Khushboo Deta Hai.'

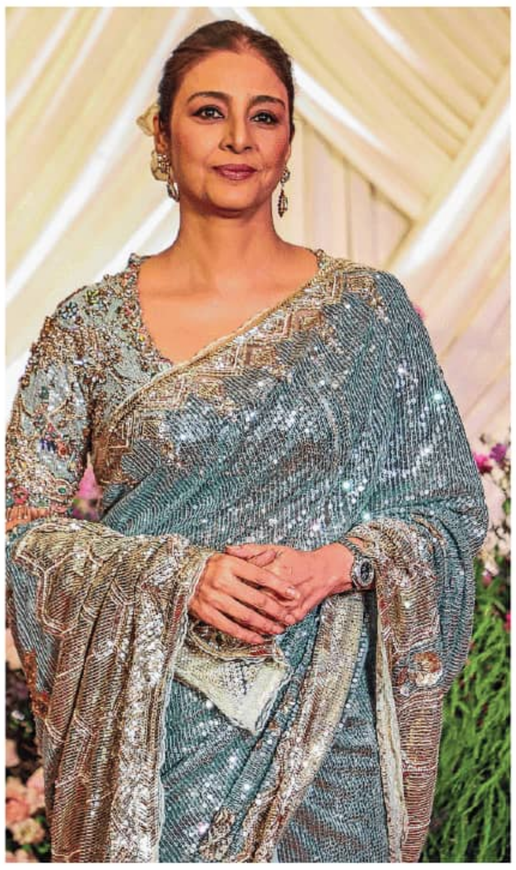
Padmini took to Instagram, where she shared a video of herself. In the clip, the actress is heard singing the song 'Madhuban Khushboo Deta Hai' from her 1978 film 'Sajan Bina Suhagan' starring Rajendra Kumar, Nutan, Vinod Mehra, Padmini Kohlapure and Shreeram Lagoo. She captioned it: "Just for you."

Shraddha took to the comment section and wrote, "Such sweet sweeeeeeet singing." Padmini is considered as one of the leading actresses of the 1980s. In a career spanning over four decades, she has worked in over 75 films. She began her acting career in 1972 at the age of seven,

and her early works include Zindagi and Dream Girl. She had her breakthrough with the film Satyam Shivam Sundaram, starring as the young Roopa.

—ETimes

Return to South Indian cinema



Tabu is set to return to South cinema after a gap of six years as the acclaimed actor, who has delivered memorable performances across industries, is now part of a new pan-India project that brings her back to familiar territory.

Her last appearance in South cinema was in Allu Arjun's 'Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo', and this upcoming film marks a significant return for her to south cinema. Tabu will next be seen in filmmaker Puri Jagannadh's action thriller Slumdog — 33 Temple Road which also features Vijay Sethupathi and Samyuktha in key roles.

Currently in post-production, the film is expected to release later this year.

For Tabu, this film is not just another project but also a return to her roots. Born and raised in Hyderabad, she shares a deep connection with the region and its film industry. — ETimes

'Name, fame shouldn't drive casting choices'

Role suitability, not fan following, should guide casting, says actress Divya Dutta

Bollywood actress Divya Dutta has opened up on the growing trend of casting influencers in major Bollywood projects, specifically based on their social media following.

The actress, while talking to IANS, highlighted that the suitability of a role should remain the primary criteria, irrespective of the number of social media followers.

In an exclusive conversation with IANS, Divya said, "I do feel casting should be done if a person suits the role, influencer or not." Talking about feeling the pressure of being active on social media considering the social media boom, the Chiraiyaa actress added that she has always followed her own path and does not feel pressured to constantly stay active online. "For me, the mantra is, whatever works for me, I will do that. I have always walked an opposite path. Whatever I post on social media, is something I genuinely enjoy. It's a part of my work life and personal life. If I feel like sharing it, I do it," she said.

Divya also spoke about her experience of being on a jury for social media and influencer-based awards recently, where she expressed how she was thrilled to witness how people from different walks of life are using digital platforms to carve their own identity. "You realise you are very limited to your own world - your work, your shoots, it's all about you! But when you go beyond that, you see a housewife turning her cooking skills into a podcast, or a travel enthusiast becoming a vlogger by just taking a step forward."

The Raja Ki Aayegi Baaraat actress added that having support and encouragement plays a crucial role in helping individuals explore their potential. "You need somebody who gives you wings to fly, and this is the time for that," she noted.

—ETimes